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pit and will exploit coal deposits reportedly discovered by the Communists.[18]

In addition to such expansion as has already been mentioned, rehabilitation and construction work have apparently been carried out at Yung-shao on the Hunan-Kwangsi-Kweichow Railway, P'ing-ting-shan in Honan, Tzu-hsing in the southern sector of the Hankow-Canton Railway, and the Kuan-yin-t'ang mine in Chia-hsien (Honan Province).[19] However, few details on construction are available.

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For the region as a whole, the Communists report, coal production increased from 2 million tons in 1949 to an estimated 6.5 million tons in 1953.[20] The latter figure represented a little over 10 per cent of Mainland China's total estimated coal output for that year. As a result of expansion in Manchuria and North China after 1953, the relative share of coal output in the Central-South doubtlessly has declined even further. While the present regional output, as compared with that of 1949, might be sufficient to meet the region's consumption requirements at the 1949-1950 level, it undoubtedly falls below the present higher consumption level so that regional dependence upon import will continue.

Electric Power

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The relative shortage of coal in the Central-

18. Ibid.

19. Newspaper Reading Handbook, 1950, pp. 519-21.

20. Chung-kuo Kung-yeh [China's Industry] Vol. I, No. 8, Dec. 20, 1949, p. 45; New China News Agency, Peking, Dec. 18, 1954.

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South Region is primarily of short-term importance. In the long run, the region can turn to its water power resources for the supply of energy. According to Kuomintang estimates, if a large hydro-electric power plant were built at the Yangtze Gorge, some 5 to 12 kilometers (3.1 to 7.4 miles) to the west of I-ch'ang in Hupeh, its maximum capacity would reach 10,560,000 kilowatts. Even during the low-water season, a dependable minimum capacity of 6 million kilowatts would be available.[21] However, since such an undertaking would require both a large initial outlay and a protracted period of construction, apparently no attempt has been made by the Chinese Communists to implement the Nationalist plan.

For the foreseeable future, electric power will continue to be generated in plants using coal as fuel. In this respect, it should be noted that the Central-South Region possessed in early 1953 little more than an estimated one-eighth of a million kilowatts in the total rated capacity of its thermal electric utility plants.[22] This figure represented less than 12 per cent of that of Mainland China as a whole. A large plant built by the Communists at Chengchow and in operation since 1953 no doubt has increased somewhat the region's present generative capacity. The same may be said of expanded facilities at Chu-chou and Ta-yeh, either completed or under way. However, even on the basis of its energy supply alone, it may be safely concluded

21. Kuo Shao-tsung Chung-kuo Kung-yeh-hua Chih T'u-ching [The Way to Industrialization in China], Taiwan, May, 1955, pp. 136-40.

22. New China News Agency, Taiyuan, Dec. 3, 1953.

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that the Central-South Region is industrially only a secondary importance, although an exception must be made in the case of ferro-alloy metals.

Iron and Steel

The largest iron and steel works in Central-South China is the Central China Iron and Steel Works at Ta-yeh in the Huang-shih industrial center in Hupeh Province. Depleted by wartime removals, the Ta-yeh plant was the subject of plans for postwar expansion. At the end of World War II, the plant was equipped with one 450-metric ton capacity blast furnace, and a 30-metric ton furnace was under construction in 1948. The latter was reported to be in operation in 1950, and the plant's total potential at full capacity was then reported to be 121,000 tons of pig-iron per year. Subsequent increases in pig-iron production at Ta-yeh have since been reported in the Communist press.[23] Pig-iron production in 1952, in the Central-South Region as a whole, was reported to be 376 per cent above the 1950 level. The iron ore for the Ta-yeh works is obtained locally, while coal is supplied from P'ing-hsiang in Kiangsi Province.

Apart from Ta-yeh, pig-iron is also produced at a number of smaller plants, the largest of which is at Hsiang-t'an in Hunan Province, which originally had two 250-ton capacity blast furnaces. A number of very small plants are located at Heng-shan, Lu-chiang and Ch'i-yang in Hunan, Chi-an in Kiangsi, Ho-hsien and Chung-t'u in Kwangsi, and possibly Liu-ho-kou in northern Hupeh.[24]

23. Hsin-chien-she [New Construction], Peking, Vol. II, No. 10, July 2, 1950, p. 30; Ta-kung Pao, Shanghai, Dec. 23, 1952; NCNA, Jan. 30, 1954.

24. Bureau of Information, Kang-tieh [Iron and Steel], pp. 20-21, 48-49.